



Indianapolis
Gregory A. Ballard, Mayor

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MAY 2, 2013

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Mayor Ballard Signs Disability Business Enterprise Proposal into Law

INDIANAPOLIS -Mayor Greg Ballard today joined City-County Council leaders and representatives of disability-owned businesses to sign into law City-County Council Proposal 289, authored by City-County Council President Maggie Lewis.

The ordinance creates a Disability Business Enterprise program which will encourage participation from disability-owned businesses on public works projects and purchase of goods and services. The ordinance establishes a one-percent goal for city and county spending with Disability Business Enterprises.

“This ordinance sends the strong message that entrepreneurship is a career choice available to individuals with disabilities,” said Mayor Ballard. “We intend this ordinance to encourage those who never thought possible the dream of starting a successful business, that it is possible in Indianapolis and this city wants you to succeed.”

According to US Census, one in five Indianapolis residents has a disability. Unfortunately 70% of persons with disabilities live in poverty and just 18% are employed.

“This program is designed to promote economic self-sufficiency and wealth creation by individuals with disabilities,” said Juli Paini, Director of the Office of Disability Affairs. “Helping people with disabilities start a company and take ownership in their economic success opens new doors of independence and provides hope to many who have long thought those opportunities were not available to them.”

The Disability Business Enterprise program is modeled after the city’s very successful Minority-, Women- and Veteran-owned business enterprise programs already in place in the city. In 2007, the city spent about \$17M with MWVBes. In 2011 that number jumped to \$131M.

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